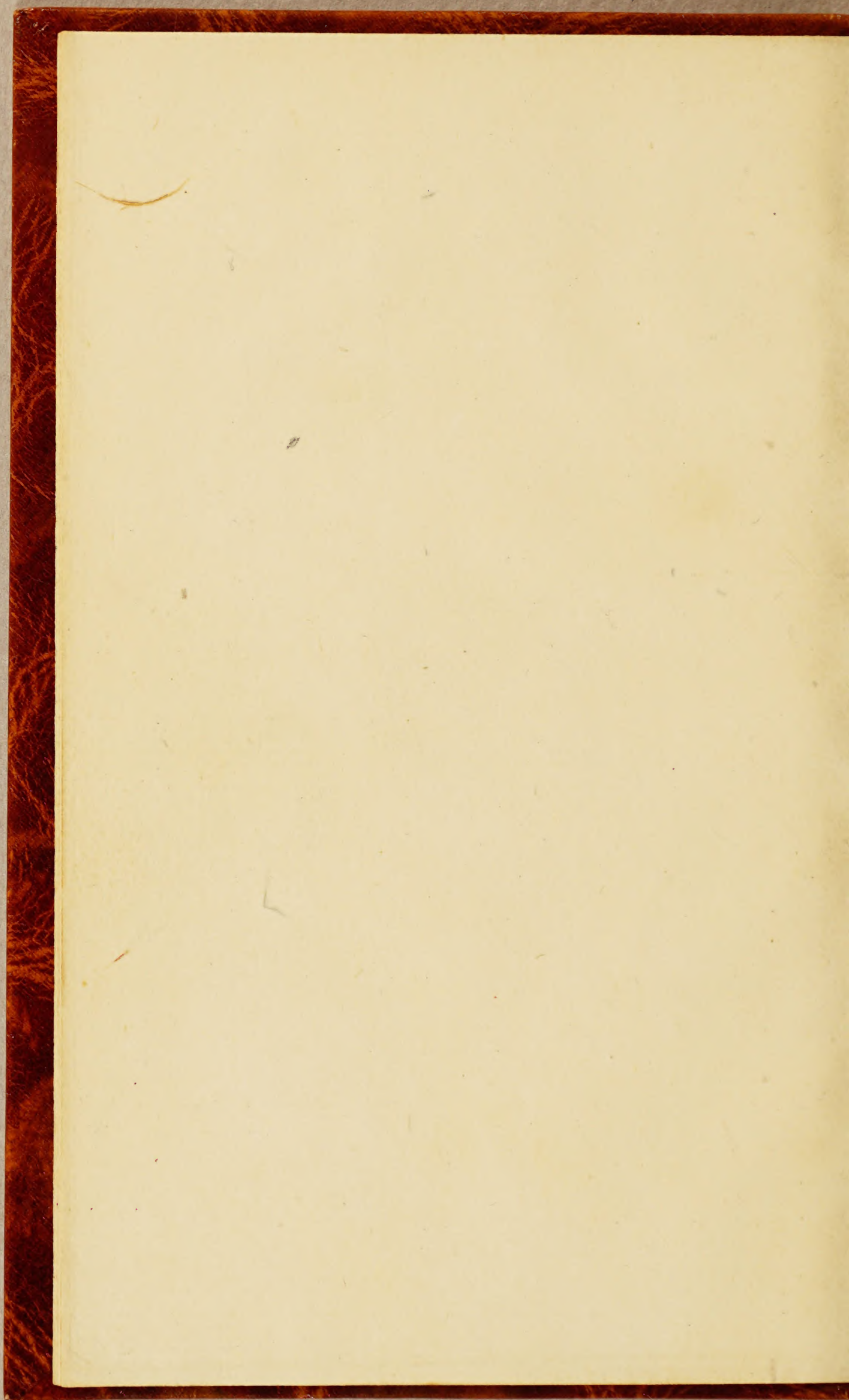


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A Voice from Heaven.

A N

ACCOUNT

Of a Late

Uncommon Appearance

IN THE

HEAVENS.

With REMARKS upon it.

Written for the Satisfaction of One that
was desirous to know the meaning of it.

By ONE of the Many who observed it.

*—Rumpe Moras, Meteoraque suspice cæli;
Illa aliquod Semper quo Monearis habent.*
Frytschius.

B O S T O N : in N. E.

Printed for Samuel Kneeland, at his Shop in
King-Street. 1719.

A brief Account of a Late Uncommon Appearance in the Heavens.
With REMARKS upon it.



WE are sensible, that of *Later Times*, there has been much *Discourse*, and some *Wonder*, about a *Meteor*, which the Learned agree to call, *The Northern Twilight*. *The Pyramidal Glade of Light*, observed by *Chil-drey* and *Cassim* and others in the Northern Hemisphere of the *Fixed Stars*, has gone by the Name of *Aurora Borealis*; And an Appearance of *Light* under various Forms in our *Meteorous Regions* has had the Name applied unto it. It should seem, that the Appearance of it, grows a little more frequent in the *Later Times* than it was in the Former; the cause whereof, if the *matter of Fact* be really so, may be worth Enquiring. Be that as it will, this *Aurora Borealis*, has been accounted a Subject worthy to be Registered in the Writings that are to be transmitted unto Posterity, and pondered by the most consummate Philosophers of the Age.

Our

Our *Stow* has in the Reign of *Q. Elizabeth*, more than once counted it an Article worthy of a *Chronicle*, That there were Nights wherein the *Heavens* did seem to burn. And I make no doubt, That some of the *Terrible Blazing Stars* Recorded by our *Hollinshead*, in the Reign of *K. Henry IV.* were no other than the *Meteor*, we are now taking into our Contemplation. The *Miscellanea Bero-
linensia*, have given us ample Relations, of the *Radiations* in the *Heavens*, which were seen extending from the *North-West* to the *North-East*, in several parts of *Europe*, since the Beginning of the present Century. But *Gassendous*, has thought it worth his while, to give us a larger Description of such an Appearance; which was not long after the Beginning of the former, seen all over *France*; and *Cambden* says, it was also seen in *England*.

IT was very much Resembled, by what was lately a matter of some Observation, (and unto some, of *Consternation*) all over *New-England*; whereof an Account shall presently be given you.

THE Large Accounts, that have been given of the *Phænomena* in the irradiated Sky of the Night, which have lately found work for the *Wise Men of Enquiry* in *Britain*, and over good part of *Europe*, you can be no stranger to. The Ingenious Pen of my worthy Neighbour and Brother, who

was an Eye-witness to some of them, has oblig'd us with a punctual Relation of what *he* saw, when the Heavens look'd as if He that is to be *Revealed from thence in flaming Fire*, had been making His Descent unto us.

THE Story of what we have just now seen, may then hope to come in among the rest, without any indecency.

“ OF *Our* late *Aurora Borealis*, I must observe what *Gassendous* does of *His*; That such a Vapour must needs be of a *Vast Altitude*, above the Earth; since the Convexity of the Earth was no hindrance to its being Visible, and in the same Scituation, to Places remotely distant from one another.

BUT the Account of *Ours*, which I now hasten to give you, is; That on the Eleventh of this *December*, (1719.) In the Evening, we were here at *Boston*, pretty much surprized, with a Luminous Appearance in the *Northern part* of the Heavens, which extended in the Form of an Arch, from the *North-West* unto the *North-East*, a considerable way. It was a sort of a *Cloud*, but so thin, that the *Stars* could be seen through it; and first of a *Lighter*, but anon of a *Redder*, and a more *Bloody Aspect*. The Region of it, was much higher than the ordinary Clouds, which were plainly seen moving below it. Of this, we were soon more fully satisfied, when we received Accounts from our Friends,

Fifty

Fifty Miles to the Northward, and twice Fifty to the Southward of us ; That (as One Letter informs us) at this time the Hemisphere being very clear, (which it was not at *Boston*,) and not a Cloud in the Sky, they saw a *Glade of Light*, grow from a smaller Bulk, first into paler Flames, and then into Redder, and so into the colour of Blood. And, That (as Another) the Red was darker at the *Western* End of it, and Brighter at the *Eastern*. It seemed something to *Expire*, and then to *Revive* again. As midnight came on, it Renewed with what was commonly thought a *more Terrible Aspect*, than in the former part of the Evening. Yea, some Hours after *That*, it so *Revived*, that People at Work about their Saw-Mills, perceived their *Trees* to look Red with the reflection of it ; and they could see to manage their work by it, as if the Light of the Moon, (which was now set) had favoured them. ”

IT is Remarkable to see, how much we are left in the *Dark*, and how much our *Philosophy*, is at a loss, about the *Lights*, that are ever now and then enkindled in the Heavens that are so near unto us. We may talk some fine Things, about the *Sulphur* and the *Nitre*, and the *Je ne scay quoy*, in the composition of them, and make our selves be admired for our Learned *Fargon*, among them that have not learned the Language. We may

also propound unto Consideration, how far the Origin of such a *Northern Twilight*, as *Gassendou's*, and *Our* late *One*, may be found, in that constant *Milky way of the Sun*, or, *Glade of Light* which every Year strikes from that part of the *Horizon* where the *Sun* sets, up towards and almost unto the *Pleiades*, in the latter End of *February*, and the Beginning of *March*, whereof there is in the *Posthumous Works* of *Dr. Hook*, an Account Endeavoured. But still the Old Philosophers ingenuous cry of, *Darkness, Darkness!* will return upon us.

I Don't see, That the *Extent* of our *Atmosphere* is hitherto well determined. For tho' 'tis pretended, That our *Baroscope* has fixed it, for less than Fifty Miles; yet *Hartsoeker* will perswade you that the Reports of that *Mercury* in this matter are not so to be relied upon, but that our *Atmosphere* may extend some Hundreds of Leagues; And, I confess, that for some Reasons, which at present I don't care to mention, I incline to that Opinion.

BUT how poorly Qualify'd are we then to form a Judgment on many Things that are doing it may be up towards the *Selvidge* of this *Atmosphere*.

THE known Principles of *Mechanism* failing us in some occurrences of *Nature*, some that are little enough tinged with *Enthusiasm* or *Fanaticism*,

Fanaticism, own themselves compelled hereunto, to consider the Operations of *Angels* Good & Bad ; *Intellectual & Voluntary Agents*.

'TIS true, There can be nothing so Ridiculous, as the *Mahometan Philosophy*, which makes the *Angels*, to be the doers of all that is continually done in the works of *Nature* ; and particularly, makes those *Meteors* which we call, *Falling Stars*, to be the *Fire-brands* with which the Good *Angels* chase away the Bad, when they come too near the Heavens, to Eves-drop the Secrets there. But yet we have all possible Assurance, that there are *Angels* both Good and Bad ; Our own Country affords Testimonies enough to overwhelm all the *Sadducees* in the World. And so incontestible it is, That all Ages have believed our *Atmosphere* to have some of the *Angelical Tribes* replenishing it. Our Sacred Scriptures do sufficiently assure us, That the *Angels* both Good and Bad, are sometimes particularly concerned about the *Meteors* in this *Atmosphere* ; the *Tempests*, and the *Thunders* raised there : yea, That the *Heavens* do Rule, and the *Invisible World*, has an astonishing share in the Government of *Ours*. As *Unphilosophical* as it may seem, to talk at this rate ; the further our Improvements in Philosophy are carried on, the less will it be found *Unreasonable*.

THE *Uncommon Occurrences* in the *Heaven*

ly Places of our Atmosphere, have doubtless their Natural Causes. And yet they may Rationally enough set the admiring and amazed Spectator a thinking, What unknown Things may be doing among the Rational Inhabitants of those Regions? This we do know, That there shall be fearful Sights, and Great Signs from Heaven, and there shall be Signs where we see the Sun and Moon and Stars, and the Powers of Heaven shall be in Commotions, (and it is possible, be at work in producing some of the Fearful Sights) among the Fore-runners of a Day that all Sober Men do look for.

INDEED, it is a Weakness, to be too Apprehensive of *Prodigies*, in all *Uncommon Occurrences*. Yea, some things may be thought *Prodigies*, which may really be *Kindnesses* to the World; among which things we may particularly reckon *Exploded Meteors*. Be sure, People are never more fanciful and whimsical, their Imaginations are never more fertile, than when they have *Uncommon Occurrences* in the *Clouds* to work upon. And it becomes not Serious Christians to be *Dismayed at the Signs of Heaven, as the Heathen are dismayed at them*. Not only the *Prodigies* which the celebrated Roman *Livy*, so fills his Pages withal, but also those which *Lycosthenes* and other later Historians have given us, were very many of them doubtless

less meer *Fancies* or *Fables*. Nevertheless, a total contempt of all *Prodigies* is an Extreme on the other hand, which is to be avoided by them that would *walk wisely*, and *neither turn aside unto the Right Hand, nor unto the Left*. Nor have some of the *Prodigies* related by *Josephus*, as foregoing & foreboding the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, found a general Disdain among the most Judicious of his Readers.

THE Learned and Famous Dr. *John Spencer*, Entertained the World, with a Treatise full of Erudition, on a Design to sink the Opinion of *Prodigies*. But the Venerable Dr. *Increase Mather*, visiting of him, on 27d. IVm. 1689. at *Bennet-College* in *Cambridge*, took the Opportunity to Enquire of him, whether he still continued of the *same Opinion* concerning *Prodigies*? To which he made a modest Answer; ‘ That he was a
 ‘ very Young Man, when he wrote his Book
 ‘ on that Subject; and had not since much
 ‘ considered it; But that he believed the *Dæ-*
 ‘ *mons* had *prænotions* of many things, and
 ‘ might give strange *præmonitions* of them
 ‘ in the way of *Prodigies*. And, that he did
 ‘ not know, whether he might not err in
 ‘ something of an Extreme, on one side, as
 ‘ others did on the other. Wherefore,
 tho’ I will not say,

Nunquam futilibus resplenduit Ignibus æther,
 Yet

Yet I will not utterly deny, but that something may be *Read* sometimes by the *Light* of those *Fires*. There is *not* always *Nothing* in them.

IN Men of a Superiour Wisdom & Goodness, it cannot but move a compassion for a miserable World, when One sees the *Terrors of Death* so generally seizing and frightening People, upon any *Uncommon Occurrences*; and especially upon any *Blazes* in the Heavens over them. *Certainly*, it may be thought, *Certainly the poor Children of Men, are generally conscious to this, that they are in ill Terms with Heaven!* Upon every fiery *Eruption* seen above, they take it for granted, that the *Wrath of GOD* is going to be *Revealed from Heaven*, against all the *Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men*, which the *Earth* is filled withal. People that know themselves *Reconciled unto GOD*, would never be so *Terrified*, as most People are, when they see any *Fires* kindling in the *Welkin* over them.

IN the mean time, it would Vex One to see how ready, & (in their own conceit) skilful, People are to *Prognosticate* upon the Things, which they take for *Prodigies*, where the *Rules of Prognostication* are so *Uncertain, Ambiguous & Precarious*; But how little Notice they take of those things which are much more *horribly Prodigious*, and on which they may found a *Prognostication* with a much more infallible certainty.

THIS

THIS is very sure; Prodigious *Impieties*, & Prodigious *Divisions*, raging in a Place, are much more certain *Omens* of *Evil to come*, than any *Sights in the Air*, which appear never so formidable. But at those Things, how few can say, LORD, *Horror with a Tempestuous Force has taken hold on me, on the account of Wicked Men who do forsake thy Law.*

THE Gentlemen, who had not arrived unto the Skill, (which according to *Seneca's* Prediction) some of our latest Astronomers have now attain'd unto, of Calculating the *Motions* and *Returns* of *Comets*, have reckon'd up (as I remember *Lubienietzki* does) about Four Hundred & Fifteen *Comets*, of whose Appearing since the Beginning of this World, we find some Footsteps in History. But were so many *Comets* all seen Blazing at once, I must freely say, That tho' such *Worlds in a state of Punishment*, would be a very awful Spectacle, yet I should not be apprehensive of such horrid *Præfages* in them, unto a *Baptized Nation*, as I should, if I saw, in such a Nation, a *Kingdom Divided*; or an Epidemical corruption of Manners in Instances, hardly known among Infidels; or the Institutions of our SAVIOUR prostituted unto very unrighteous purposes; or Impious Attempts to degrade the Infinite & Eternal Son of God, into the Class of *Creatures*, & render Him in all things Different from, & Inferiour to His
Glorious

Glorious FATHER; and the highest Professors of the Christian Religion fall into such a *Lacedæan* Temper, as to be shy of appearing to assert the most Vital Point in the Faith of Christianity.

FOR my part, should I *Really* see, (what many under the prepossessions of a strong Imagination, have *supposed*, when the *Clouds* have an *Insolite* Aspect upon them; I say, should I *Really* see) the Sky covered with *Phantasms* of *Swords & Spears*, and *Rivers of Blood*, and *Armies* or *Navies* Engaging one another, and the *Canon* with a roaring mouth vomiting out *Fire* upon one another; I don't know, that I should look on these things as more *Ominous*, or be more affected with them, than if I should be so unhappy as to see, the *Spirit of Piety* generally lost, & what shall be quite the *Reverse* of it, prevailing among a People that have made an high Profession of it; Or, See a *Spirit of Extortion* generally dispose a People to nothing so much as *Preying* upon one another; Or, See the Blessings of a *Good Education* generally despised & neglected; Or, See a People confessing that such & such *Needless Expences* ruin them, & yet generally resolving to *Retrench* none of them; Or, See a People that have but *Few Friends* in the *World*, madly set upon the *Disobliging* & the *Discouraging* of them; Or, See a People Evidently near a dreadful *Convulsion*, & yet no
Men

Men of Sense Uniting to find out Methods for the Relief of the Publick Distresses, but all generally Alienated from one another, broken into Factions, & Sacrificing all to *Cursed Animosities* : Or, Finally to see a *Faithful Man* torn to pieces, if he tell a People of the Perils he sees them expos'd unto. If our Country have yet the Happiness, to have no such *Symtoms* in any Degree upon it, I should think, we may defy all the *Prodigies* in the World, for any *Prædictions* of *Evil*, which they may give unto us. I hope therefore we shall Unanimously deprecate 'em ! A Reign of *Piety*, & *Honesty*, & *Charity*, among us, would be such a *Token for Good*, that the *People in the Wilderness* could see no *Tokens*, that they should have any cause to be *Afraid* of.

BUT yet, that I may more fully Explain my self, and give you my plain Sentiments on this Point ; *What Interpretation is to be made of the Aurora Borealis, that Heaven has lately shown unto us ?* I will say, That tho' I can do very little by way of *Prognostic* ; And I would not say that like the People of *Gibeah*, when we see a *Pillar of Smoke and a Flame ascending in Heaven*, we must conclude, That *Evil is coming upon us* ; Nor would I think the *Meteor* to be a *Signal Forerunner* of whatever happens to *Follow* after it ; Like the *Honest Old Man* upon *Tenderton Steeple* : Nevertheless, No doubt the
other

other *Meteors* of theHeavens,as well as the *Rainbow*, are designed for *Instructive* ones. The Glorious GOD, who is their and our Creator, (even HE, who is also our SAVI-OUR,) says of us, whom He calls to be the Spectators of them, *Surely they will Receive Instruction.*

Well Sang the Poet,
*Qui Meteora videt liquido radiantia Calo,
 Hic videt Æterni facta stupenda Dei.*

Who sees bright *Meteors* in the *Liquid Skies*,
 The wondrous Works of the *Eternal Spies*.

A Religious Mind may even with some *Elegancy* of Devotion, consider some *Intimations* from Heaven, which our *Aurora Borealis* may, at least, by way of *Occasional Reflection* lead one to think upon. Whether the *Aurora Borealis* were a *Prodigy* or no, the *Man* is *One*, who shall ridicule such an *Improvement* of it.

THE *Sieur le Peyrere*, has given a most wonderful Account, That in *Greenland*, where the Night in the Winter is excessively long, when they don't enjoy the *Moon*, there arises a *Light* in the *North*, (called therefore the *Northern Light*,) that shines over all the Country, as if the *Moon* were at the Full; The Darker the Night is, the Clearer the Light; It looks like a Flying Fire; it mounts up like a huge Pole; it
 passes

passes from one Place to another ; it continues the whole Night ; and it is of incredible use to them in the Business of their Lives.

WE may also render our *Northern Light* of some use unto us, in the Greatest Business of our Lives, if it awaken in us the *Right Thoughts of the Righteous*.

MAY not the *Fiery Appearance*, make us Inquisitive, Whether we have no *Fires* among us here below, that should be lovingly Extinguished ? Or, whether no Rash Doings may threaten to raise *Fires* in our Churches, that will not be easy to be Extinguished ! Sollicitous, therewithal to *Put far from our Tabernacles*, those *Iniquities*, that may be punished by *Fires* without a Metaphor laying our Houses in Ashes ?

MAY not the *Bloody Appearance*, admonish us, to beware of that *Wringing*, which we have been told, what it will *bring*, if it be persisted in ! And to quicken our Cares and Prayers for our *Eastern Plantations* !

MAY not *Rare Sight*s calling us to look more than without them we should have done unto the *Heavens*, very well put us upon thinking, whether we are not so *Buried* in the Business of the *Earth*, as to need something that may call us off, to converse in a more Divine way, with more *Heavenly Objects* ?

IT is an Ancient Prophecy, *I will shew wonders in Heaven above, Blood & Fire & Vapour of Smoke ; before the Great and Notable Day of the Lord come.* Why should not this *Fiery & Bloody Appearance*, in the *Vapour of Smoke* lately before us, put us in mind of that *Great & Notable Day* ? A Day, when the *Great GOD* our *SAVIOUR* shall be *Revealed from Heaven in flaming Fire, with His mighty Angels* ; A Day, that shall *Come as a Thief in the Night, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat* ; A Day, which, O
Secure

Secure and Sleeping World, *It is near, it is near, and it hasteth greatly!* 'Tis well for us if we are, and no little part of our Business to be, Ready for it. The Pagans themselves had a Tradition,

—affore Tempus

*Quo Mare, quo Tellus, Corruptaque Regia cæli
Ardeat, et Mundi moles operosa Laboret.*

WE Christians have a more sure word of Prophecy, which has given us the Warning of a tremendous Conflagration, and being Warned of GOD, we do in these Oracles find the Methods prescribed, wherein we are to make Preparation for it. The whole Work of Christianity! Fires in the Heavens, how properly do they for this purpose become our Monitors!

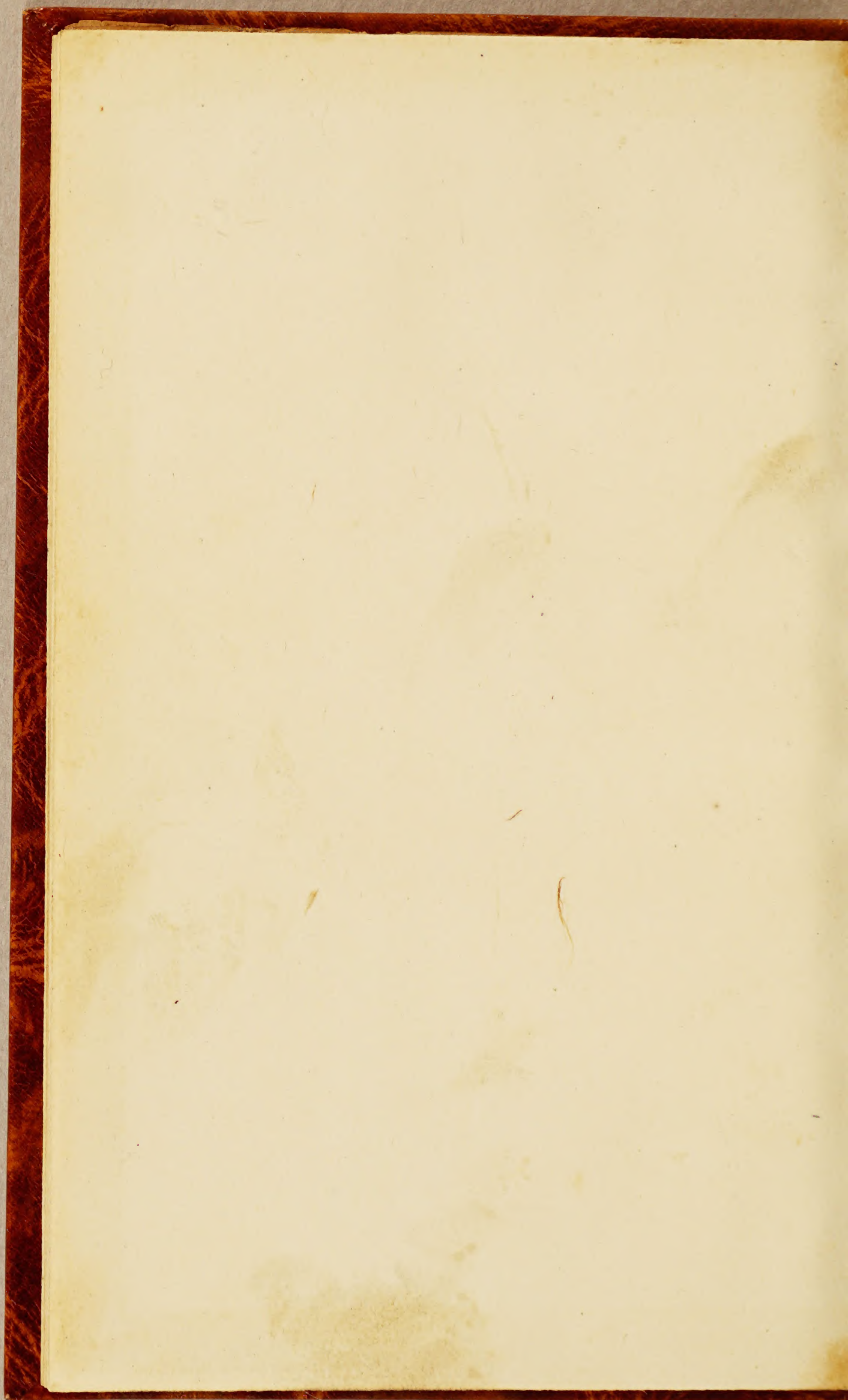
Finally; WHAT Extraordinary Spectacles may be Exhibited in the Heavens, before that Grand REVOLUTION, which the Multitude of the Heavenly Host making a Descent from thence, is to bring upon the World, I know not. But I am certain of This, That whether any foregoing Signs be given of it in the Heavens or no, the Day must be very Near, when the Stone cut out of the Mountains, will break in Pieces and Consume all the Ten Kingdoms, which it is to fall upon, and the Kingdom of GOD shall come on, wherein we shall see Glory to GOD in the Highest, and Good-will among Men: What cannot be Accomplished, but by Dispensations to be trembled at, as well as longed for!

BUT so much — [if this may be thought Enough!] to satisfy on the present occasion. I am very much of Avicenna's mind; *Quicquid sufficientæ additur superfluitati ascribitur.* And if the Thoughts to which I have devoted one little piece of a Day prove so Acceptable to you, that you may judge, that they may prove also Serviceable unto any others, you have my consent unto any Communication, you may think proper for them.

Written, 24d. X^m.

1719.

F I N I S.



D. Math.
C. 435

